The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WHOLE NO. 1805 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1945 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 35, NO. 46

Thru
Payroll
Savings

LABOR, USA

Washington, D. C.—The nineteenth edition of the American Federationist of the Air, broadcast on the "Labor, USA" program over the American Broadcasting Company network, included the following outstanding feature articles to supplement the news:

Stop, Look and Listen

By LEWIS G. HINES

AFL Legislative Representative

Ordinarily, Congress seldom breaks speed records. The mills of its law-making machinery usually grind very slowly indeed. But every once in a while the gentlemen from the 48 states who foregather on Capitol Hill get their dander up—and their speedometers rise accordingly.

It happened once during the war as the result of a strike situation—in which, I hasten to add, the American Federation of Labor was not involved. Before anyone could measure the consequences, Congress passed the Smith-Connally Bill—passed it over the late President Roosevelt's veto.

Now it's happening again. This time, strangely enough, in connection with the proposed repeal of the very same Smith-Connally Act.

During the two years that the Smith-Connally Act has been in operation, everybody has come to realize that it was a serious mistake, just as labor warned in the first place. When I say everybody, I include not only labor, but industry, the government, the public and even the sponsors of the law—Congressman Smith of Virginia and Senator Connally of Texas. In fact, Congressman Smith led the move to have the law repealed.

But while the House Military Affairs Committee was considering the repealer a few days ago another strike situation developed.

And once more Congress is acting in haste. Instead of contenting itself with repealing the original law, the House Military Affairs Committee has now tacked on some new provisions which are far more dangerous and threatening to peaceful labor relations than the Smith-Connally Act.

I do not propose to enter into any detailed analysis of these new anti-labor proposals here. I merely want to sound a word of caution to Congress. The conservative New York Times summed up the situation with regard to this legislation as follows:

"It is time we learned that haphazard interventions, or laws passed in anger in a moment of crisis, seldom turn out well."

This is a lesson that Congress should take to heart. Right now the labor-management conference is trying to find the way to industrial peace. It would be well for Congress to "stop, look and listen" until the conference has completed its work and presented its recommendations to the President.

Justice For Government Workers

By BERNIECE HEFFNER

Secretary of the American Federation of Government Employes

Uncle Sam is the biggest employer in America. He operates the nation's most important business—the business of all the people in the United States. That business must be run well or all of us will suffer. In order to make certain that Uncle Sam's business is run well, he must have competent and efficient employes who are satisfied with their jobs and whose hearts are in their work. That is why it has always been the national policy for the government to be a model employer.

To carry out this policy, President Truman's administration has now recommended to Congress a program calling for 20 percent increases in the salary of classified Civil Service employes. Higher increases are proposed for top federal officials.

The American Federation of Government Employes and other AFL unions which represent workers in the federal service heartily welcome this move. Before the President acted we had asked Congress on our own account for 24 percent increases. We consider the administration's recommendations an endorsement of our program.

Some people may be surprised by this new drive for adjustment of government pay because Congress has already voted one increase for federal workers this year. But that gain was more than wiped out when the government service returned to a forty-hour week from a forty-eight-hour week.

The resultant loss in overtime put government workers right back where they were before—in a position where their earnings fail to cover the inflated cost of living. If that condition continues, it will drive the best and most efficient federal employes out of the government service into jobs in private industry which pay more money.

That must not happen. Nor is it right to expect government workers to take on outside jobs in their spare time or rent out rooms in their homes in order to bolster their earnings.

Uncle Sam can afford to pay a decent, living wage to his loyal servants. He should also offer substantial pay increases to members of Congress, judges and cabinet officers so that the highest type of public officials can be attracted to these positions. We are confident that you will agree with these common-sense conclusions. If you do, why not drop a postcard to your Congressman and Senators telling them that you favor the President's recommendations. We will be deeply grateful for your help.

Bates Describes Housing Shortage As No. 1 Threat To Nation's Progress

Washington, D. C.—Harry C. Bates, chairman of the Housing Committee of the American Federation of Labor, warned that "the housing shortage is about to become the number one threat to the American postwar standard of living with homelessness a reality for American families in thousands of communities within a year."

Speaking before the meeting of the National Association of Homebuilders at the Statler Hotel here, Mr. Bates called for "close and positive working cooperation among homebuilding enterprise, homebuilding labor and the government toward achieving a long-range goal of unified national housing policy which would enable private enterprise and local initiative to make a maximum contribution to the welfare of the entire people." A summary of Mr. Bates' statement follows:

"Intolerable overcrowding is already a reality most of our communities are witnessing today. Tomorrow holds a real threat of actual homelessness to many American families. Over 1,500,000 married veterans are already in immediate need of homes. More than 1,500,000 returning veterans are expected to marry and establish new homes within next year, but will find no place to set up new households. Some 3,000,000 new homes will therefore be sought in the course of next year by veterans alone, with a prospect of not more than 400,000 to 500,00 built next year and most of them at prices out of reach of the veteran. There is no blinding of the fact that the housing shortage is about to become the number one threat to the American postwar standard of living. That threat must be met with promptness and courage through a cooperative effort of building business, labor and the government.

"Among the immediate problems facing us now, the foremost is that of an inflationary price boom. We must avert the danger of (1) a large mass of our families being priced out of homes; (2) the homes to be built being priced out of reach of the mass market; and (3) the homebuilders being priced out of investment opportunities with workers being priced out of jobs.

"Real estate and home-price inflation cannot be held by wishing. We cannot talk ourselves into price stability. Nor can the problem be equitably solved by snap judgment. The American Federation of Labor and the Building Trades Department are now making a careful and searching study of the ways and means to meet this complex and challenging problem.

"The building trades are doing their full part to assure an adequate supply of labor in all classes of skills to meet the demand for an expanding homebuilding program in all parts of the country. The flow of mechanics and laborers who have been serving their country in the armed forces back to their peacetime jobs is increasing every day. In addition, apprentice training programs have been jointly set up by labor and industry in thousands of our communities, with increased training under way under cooperative labor-management plans.

"Labor is equally alert to the need of making clear and farsighted provision for more homes over a period of years, under an improved legislative program providing for a unified American housing policy. The American housing market is a universal market. To reach it we must have a complete program serving families in all incomes. This program must give primary responsibility to private builders and private investment to reach more home seekers than they ever have before. But this program must also include public aid to the families of low incomes, so that every American family could be assured a decent home. Labor cont for a close and positive working cooperation among homebuilding enterprises, homebuilding labor and the government toward achieving a long-range goal of unified national housing policy should enable private enterprise and local initiative to make a maximum contribution to the welfare of the entire people."

Workers Spurn Job Offers Because Take-Home Pay Is Cut In Half

Washington, D. C.—American workers who have lost their jobs since V-J Day are refusing to accept new employment offered to them because the wages are from 34 to 53 percent lower than they earned before.

This was announced by the United States Employment Service after a survey of conditions in three "typical" cities—Atlanta, Columbus and Trenton.

Labor surveys also disclosed that many discharged servicemen also are refusing to take jobs at cut-rate wages, preferring to get along on unemployment compensation until a better break turns up.

The Employment Service said there was no mystery behind the fact that available jobs are going begging while more than 1,500,000 persons are looking for work. The jobs now being offered, its studies disclosed, would mean a cut in take-home pay averaging from 34 to 49 percent for men and from 49 to 53 percent for women.

Explaining, the USES said the lower-skilled jobs available paid lower wages, and a further cut resulted from reduction of the work-week from 48 to 40 hours.

The USES gave these other reasons in answering the question, "why are there large numbers of workers seeking employment when there are also large numbers of job openings?":

1. The labor market was inflated during the war by inclusion of many workers who had learned only a single skill.

2. There are few, if any, peacetime jobs calling for these limited skills.

3. A sharp reduction in the number of jobs available in the skilled categories.

4. Most available jobs are for men while most of the job seekers are women.

The USES's last check, made several weeks ago, listed some 700,000 job openings for the country as a whole.

The report said that more than half the Atlanta men seeking unemployment compensation had earned more than $50 a week on their latest jobs, "but such wages can be earned on only 12 percent of the jobs open to men in Atlanta at the time of the survey."

In Trenton, more than 60 percent of the male applicants earned $60 a week or more on their last jobs, but 95 percent of the available jobs paid less than this, while two out of three paid less than $40, according to the USES.

The report said that in Columbus, a majority of male applicants had recent earnings of $55 or more, "but now only 7 percent of the jobs pay this much."

AFL Unions Propose Parley To Promote Better Government

Washington, D. C.—A proposal for a labor-management conference to promote better government was submitted to President Truman by the Government Employes Council of the American Federation of Labor.

In a letter to the President, Foster J. Pratt, Secretary-Treasurer of the council, said:

"In the past, various 'experts,' many of them actually subsidized by large corporations, have managed to set themselves up in the center of governmental operations and to radiate their assumed influence to the best advantage of themselves. Now, that the war is over, it seems entirely possible that this same influence will be brought to bear to take over the influential zones of government. It is the fervent hope of this council that if there now are plans or if any plans soon are to be unfolded in this direction that the leaders of this council may have the courtesy of a consultation before they are adopted or announced.

"We believe the subject of better government is of such vital interest to the President of the United States that you may want to consider the announcement of and convening at an early date of all leaders of whatever persuasion to general conference in Washington to turn their attention to suggestions to be submitted to you to bring about efficiency in all phases of executive government.

"Certainly the Government Employes Council of the American Federation of Labor stands prepared to bear its portion of responsibility of any assignment which you determine as result of setting up such conference. If you will be good enough to indicate your desire to call such a conference at a convenient date, rest assured this council will remain on call."

House Group Drafting Substitute For Delayed Full Employment Bill

Washington, D. C.—The House Expenditures Committee closed nearly seven weeks of hearings on "full employment" legislation by appointing a subcommittee of five which Chairman Manasco "hopes" will draft some sort of a compromise measure.

Four of the five have strongly opposed sections of the three pending bills, the counterpart of the one originally offered in the Senate, the Senate's moderated draft and an elaboration of the original offered by Representative La Follette, of Indiana.

Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach, appearing at the final hearing, declared that some opponents of the proposals did not want full employment, preferring a pool of idle labor to keep pressure on wages, and that some contradict themselves in their arguments.

President Truman's continued pressure for action and Secretary Vinson's charge last week that he smelled something like a filibuster against action in the committee appeared to have had some effect, but not much. Mr. Manasco said:

"If the issue had been brought to a vote today the committee would have tabled all the pending measures."

On the subcommittee are Representatives Manasco, chairman; Cochran and Whittington of Mississippi, Democrats, and Bender of Ohio and Hoffman of Michigan, Republicans. Only Mr. Cochran has supported the President's desires on the measure, although Mr. Whittington has said that he would like to see some sort of a compromise measure.

Dewey Pleads For Rule of Reason

Ithaca, N. Y.—Governor Dewey called on labor and management to substitute a rule of reason in employe-management controversies for the old rule of tooth and claw, and demanded that both sides recognize in all disputes that the interest of the public was paramount. He did not suggest legislation or machinery to solve the labor-industry difficulties.

Speaking at a convocation called to dedicate and formally open the New York School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University, which is supported by state funds, Mr. Dewey urged recognition of the fundamental proposition that "no one piece of our economy can be happy or prosperous if it attempts to profit at the expense of the rest."

In his address, Governor Dewey declared that one of the best features of the new school was that no one in labor, management or government regarded it as a cure-all even though it was a trail-blazing effort.

Explaining the purposes and aspirations of the school, Governor Dewey said:

"Recurrent outbreaks of strikes underline the fact that labor relations are never static and that no formula can be devised within the democratic framework which will wholly wipe out disputes. Nor does anyone who values our way of life wish to end the continuing effort by both labor and management to advance their own interests. But the old rule of the tooth and claw is out of date and should come to an end.

"We are growing up. We must now attain the age of reason. One of the things of which I have been proudest during my 3 years in Albany is our splendid record in the relationship between capital and labor in the state of New York."

SAY, LISTEN!

For the rest of this year, the AFL presents each Saturday evening at 6:45 P.M., EST, over the nation-wide network of the American Broadcasting Company a radio news-magazine, featuring the latest news at home and abroad and special reports by expert commentators on important labor problems. This program is listed in the radio columns of your newspaper as "Labor-U.S.A." Our own subtitle for the program is "The American Federationist of the Air." Don't miss these bright, newsy broadcasts! Listen every Saturday night!

Labor-Management Parley Driving Toward Agreement

Wage Issue Is Dropped As CIO Retreats; Collective Bargaining Backed

Washington, D. C.—Substantial progress was reported by the Labor-Management Conference seeking to minimize industrial disputes as committees began drafting reports on specific recommendations.

The first major agreement reported by Conference Secretary George W. Taylor was on collective bargaining. All six conference committees have fully accepted the principle that collective bargaining is the primary and basic method of resolving disputes between unions and employers. Failure of employers to accede to this principle wrecked the labor-management conference held after the last war in 1919, Mr. Taylor said.

Another committee was reported unofficially to have reached unanimous agreement in favor of repeal of the Smith-Connally Act on the ground that it has increased industrial strife instead of reducing it. The American Federation of Labor fought this measure from the beginning and has never wavered in its opposition.

The committee on existing collective agreements, Mr. Taylor told newsmen, "appears to be in agreement that there must be some terminal point to grievance procedure if the agreement is to contain an effective no-strike, no-lockout clause." This is to prevent management from defeating the purpose of such agreements by delaying action on grievances interminably.

Improvement of machinery for settling jurisdictional disputes by the unions themselves is being explored by a third committee.

Hearings are being held by a fourth committee on ways and means of bolstering the United States Conciliation Service. Among the witnesses appearing before this group were Conciliation Service Director Warren and John Steelman, special assistant to President Truman.

The way was cleared for action by the conference on major issues when CIO President Murray was forced at a meeting of the Executive Committee to back down from his original demand that the conference pass upon pending wage disputes.

Mr. Murray explained that all he meant by his resolution on the wage question was for the conference to endorse collective bargaining on wages now and in the future.

"Of course, no one either on the labor side or on the management side is going to object to that," one delegate commented.

But, originally, the CIO sought to toss into the conference's lap all its current wage disputes in steel, automobiles and other industries. The delegates got the impression that Mr. Murray wanted the conference to fight the CIO's battles for it. John L. Lewis, delegate for the United Mine Workers Union, castigated Mr. Murray at a stormy session of the Executive Committee. AFL delegates took the same stand. Discovering he had no support, Murray retreated completely.

However, the CIO sought to propagandize the issue and make the nation's workers believe that the American Federation of Labor was not supporting higher wages.

AFL President William Green pointed out that the American Federation of Labor has led the fight for higher wage rates and that it is throwing its full support to affiliated unions in their attempts to negotiate wage rate increases with employers.

But such matters, he emphasized, must be decided through collective bargaining and cannot be injected into the labor-management conference which has no power to enforce its recommendations and has no authority or desire to establish a new, nation-wide wage formula.

Clothing Industry's Strike Forces New Price Boost

Washington, D. C.—The clothing industry has pulled a successful strike against the government and the nation's consumers.

Refusal of manufacturers to produce lower-priced garments finally forced the Office of Price Administration to grant the industry another 15 percent increase in ceiling prices for such merchandise as underwear, pajamas, hosiery, shirts and handkerchiefs.

When labor strikes, the newspapers and Congress go into conniption fits—but apparently it's perfectly all right for industry to employ the same tactics because organized labor was forced to carry on a lone fight against the price increases.

For the past two years the OPA has tried to keep cheap clothing prices at about their 1943 levels, which were, of course, marked away up from prewar standards.

The OPA excused its change of policy by pointing out that most of the affected items had disappeared from the market, leaving only the highest-priced merchandise available to purchasers. Under the revised order, the OPA said, the lower priced garments will again become available, although the retail selling prices will be "slightly" higher.

Closed Shop Ban Before High Court

Washington, D. C.—The United States Supreme Court agreed to pass judgment on the anticlosed shop amendment to the Florida State Constitution adopted a year ago. The test case was instituted by the American Federation of Labor and the Florida State Federation of Labor.

However, the high tribunal may limit its decision to the technical question as to whether a Federal District Court exercised proper jurisdiction when it upheld the validity of the amendment.

If the Supreme Court should decide that the district court exceeded its authority, the latter's decision apparently would be nullified.

The American Federation of Labor contended the Florida law is arbitrary and discriminatory against union members.

The AFL declared 100,000 employes are working in Florida under union-security agreements. Whether Florida can enforce such a law, it said, "is a matter of gravest importance to the 14,000,000 members of organized labor in this country."

Closed shop agreements, it contended, are the only means for workers to insure job security, protection from employer discrimination, equality of bargaining power and protection of working standards against nonunion wage competition.

AFL Endorses Pepper Bill Giving Maternity And Child Health Care

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green informed Chairman Murray of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor that the AFL Social Security Committee has endorsed the Pepper bill providing a program for maternity and child health. In a letter to Senator Murray, Mr. Green said:

"Our membership, which has always concerned itself with the broad social needs of the nation, has been profoundly shocked by the report that 40 out of every 100 men examined by Selective Service were found unfit for military service because of physical and mental defects, many of which could have been corrected or prevented in childhood.

"This startling fact demands prompt and drastic action by the federal government to put within reach of every one of its citizens good medical care and health services. We believe the passage of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill will achieve this urgent objective and are giving unremitting support to that measure.

"Without relaxing our efforts to obtain the passage of that bill, we are persuaded that action must be taken without delay on S. 1318 which would be a first step in building a comprehensive national health program by placing medical care and welfare services immediately within reach of all mothers and children.

"Two emergency situations make immediate action on S. 1318 necessary. One is the imminent termination of the Emergency Maternity and Infant Care program for servicemen's wives and babies. A magnificent job has been done by the Children's Bureau on this program in providing medical, nursing, and hospital care for 900,000 mothers and for over 100,000 sick babies. Congress has clearly indicated that it intends to cut off this care at the close of the war. A program for the continuation of this service must therefore be found if the nation is not to lapse back to its prewar indifference to the health of our children. Every American citizen has the right to be safely born. S. 1318 will do much to make good that right.

"Our second reason for urging prompt passage of S. 1318 is the early ending of the government's day care program for children of working mothers, under the Lanham Act. With the close of this wartime program, probably in March 1946, there will be no federal aid for this type of care. We must not return to the days of latch-key children, left to roam the streets or locked in empty homes while mothers work to keep their children alive. These days will return unless the federal government gives a generous hand to communities in providing adequate day-care facilities since there is every indication that many more thousands of mothers will have to work after the war than were employed before the war. Day-care service to the working mothers of the nation should be put on a permanent basis, and provision for care should be made in terms of children's needs, not as a by-product of some other program."

COURT UPHOLDS RYAN AGAINST CIO RAIDERS

New York City.—Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, won the second and presumably final round of a court action brought by "insurgent" longshoremen to force a formal hearing on internal union affairs before any new dock contract is signed with the New York Shipping Association.

In a unanimous decision the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court reversed an injunction issued Oct. 26 by Judge Carroll G. Walter which ordered Mr. Ryan not to sign a contract until a hearing was held. The Appellate Court ruled that John Berg, cochairman of the "insurgent" group in whose name the action was filed, had "failed to establish any right to the relief granted."

Louis Weldman, attorney for Mr. Ryan, said the decision had cleared the way "for arbitration without any strings," while Mr. Ryan said it would "hearten every longshoreman and member of the ILA." Mr. Ryan charged that the insurgents were the "fifth column for the pro-Communists in the CIO who are trying to create trouble on our waterfront."

PARLEY TO REVIEW SHIPYARD WAGE RATES

Washington, D. C.—A national conference to review wages in the shipbuilding industry, affecting nearly a half million workers, was voted by the Shipbuilding Stabilization Committee.

The committee set December 4 as the date for the parley. Over 400 representatives of labor and management, as well as of government agencies, are expected to participate.

Demands of unions for higher wages to compensate for increased living costs and for reduction of the workweek will be considered at the conference.

Also, on November 19, AFL Metal Trades unions on the West Coast will meet with management and government representatives in Spokane, Wash., to discuss proposed amendments to the Pacific Coast master agreement for the shipbuilding industry.

ARNOLD ELECTED TO LABOR PRESS POST

Springfield, Ill.—R. E. Woodmansee, secretary-treasurer of the International Labor Press of America, announced the election of W. B. Arnold, editor of The Weekly Dispatch, San Antonio, Texas, as 9th vice president of the association to fill the vacancy caused by the death of W. J. Moran, who died last August.

Mr. Arnold has been editor and publisher of the official labor paper of San Antonio for many years and was a close friend of the late "Bill" Moran.

UNION GIVES PLAYING CARDS TO SERVICE HOSPITALS

Chicago.—Earl W. Jimerson, president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, announced that the union has presented 5,000 decks of playing cards to 60 Army and Navy hospitals for the diversion of convalescing servicemen.

HOUSE UNIT APPROVES ANTI-LABOR MEASURE

Washington, D. C.—An extremely bad piece of antiunion legislation was reported out of the House Military Affairs Committee as Congress spitefully retaliated against strikes.

In voting repeal of the Smith-Connally Act, the committee tacked on provisions that could completely wreck collective bargaining. Among other things the legislation would make a union legally responsible if its members violated a no-strike pledge in a contract. A union could lose its entire contract with a corporation as the result of a spontaneous and unauthorized walkout by a local.

SCHWELLENBACH ASKS FEDERAL JOB STANDARDS

Washington, D. C.—Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach asked Congress to empower his department to operate public employment offices "in any state which fails or refuses" to operate such offices in line with federal standards.

Mr. Schwellenbach was a witness before a Senate Labor Subcommittee considering proposals affecting the future of the United States Employment Service. He appeared one day after a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee voted, over administration objections, to return this service from federal to state control promptly.

"Our public employment offices are carrying the heaviest work load in their history," said the secretary.